

as we celebrate the accomplishments and the lives of Grover and Sandra, we can take pride in knowing they have influenced so many people in a positive way. As a fellow elected official and as a friend, I appreciate the importance of dedication and devotion to public office and the community. Their legacy will be a constant reminder that together, two people can make an extraordinary difference in the lives of many.

BACK TO HEALTH WEEK

HON. SUE W. KELLY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 11, 2000

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Speaker, today is the first day of "Back to Health Week," a national campaign created to increase awareness of back pain as well as possible causes and prevention. Sponsored by the North American Spine Society, this week is designed to educate Americans about their spine and how they can prevent common back pain.

The facts of back pain speak for themselves. Did you know that at some point in their lives, more than 80% of American adults experience back pain? Or, that 1 out of 14 adults will visit a physician this year due to back or neck pain and that back pain is the second most common reason people visit a physician? These statistics demonstrate how important it is to raise awareness about this health problem that affects so many Americans.

One Famous American who suffers from back pain is two-time Cy Young Award winner and Major League Baseball pitcher Randy Johnson. After Johnson won the Cy Young in 1995, he was sidelined because of back problems for most of the 1996 season. Johnson captured his second Cy Young last year after surgery to correct a herniated disk and months of physical therapy.

Another highlight of "Back to Health Week" is an event to distribute information about back pain. "Back to Health Day" will be held Thursday April 13th in the Capitol. "Back to Health Day" will provide an array of educational materials, including guidelines to a healthy back, exercises to strengthen your back, and how to prevent back pain. In addition, representatives from the North American Spine Society will be on hand to discuss commonly asked questions about back pain, causes, and prevention. I encourage my colleagues to join us for "Back to Health Day" as we learn the most effective ways to prevent and alleviate back pain.

I commend the North American Spine Society for organizing "Back to Health Week" and for their commitment to ensuring Americans learn to keep their backs healthy.

"THE QUILTS OF TEARS"—HONORING VIETNAM VETERANS AND THEIR LOVED ONES WHO HAVE SUFFERED FROM AGENT ORANGE

HON. LANE EVANS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 11, 2000

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, the loss and suffering of Vietnam veterans and their loved ones due to the use of Agent Orange is one of the sad legacies of the Vietnam War that continues to haunt our nation. Because of our nation's use of herbicides during the war, tens of thousands of Vietnam veterans have died or live daily with the scars of disease. As any veteran will tell you, the scars of war are not just physical, but also emotional. Too many veterans and their loved ones live each day with the continuing pain of dealing with the loss and the illnesses caused by Agent Orange.

Next week, the "quilts of tears" will arrive in Washington, DC. This is an important event because the quilts tell many of the stories that need to be told about the devastation this tragedy has exacted on too many lives.

Recently, I received a letter from Ms. Jennie R. LeFevre, an Agent Orange widow, who eloquently describes her own experiences as well as the legacy left of broken soldiers and broken families. I believe it captures the essence of the Agent Orange tragedy as well as the costs that our nation continues to pay for a war that ended almost twenty-five years ago.

The quilts will arrive on the Mall on April 17 and will be available for viewing near the Vietnam Memorial. They will also be on display on Memorial Day on the banks of the Reflecting Pool. I urge my colleagues to visit this moving and unforgettable memorial. The letter from Ms. LeFevre follows:

THE QUILTS OF TEARS

Agent Orange has been interwoven into the fabric of the lives of many Vietnam Veterans and their families. To tell their story, the "Quilts of Tears" project was created. It is to show the world the suffering and pain that the Agent Orange Victims and their families have endured. Each block in the "Quilts of Tears" reflect their struggles with life and death issues of Agent Orange. Agent Orange has left invisible scars on the hearts and minds of these victims and their families.

I have recently heard these words about Vietnam Veterans. The words are, "All gave some, but some gave all". Such is the case of the thousands of who have already lost their lives to the great tragedy Agent Orange, for they were killed in Vietnam and didn't know it. They were killed by the silent and invisible bullet, Agent Orange. Their names do not appear on the black granite Wall in Washington, DC, the "Quilts of Tears" are their Wall.

The "Quilts of Tears" was founded by Jennie R. LeFevre of Shady Side, MD, Founder and President of the Agent Orange Victims and Widows Support Network. The quilts are a Tribute, Memorial and Honor to the Vietnam Agent Orange Victims, both living and dead. Each block represents a victim, and they show the victim's unit in Nam, years served in Nam and the nature of the victim's health problems relating to Agent Orange.

At present, there are ten quilts, each measuring 80 by 100 inches, each quilt contains 20 blocks. At displays, the quilts are hung on walls or spread on the ground with walking space between each one to allow viewing from any angle. "The Quilt of Tears" project is mentioned throughout the Internet on many of the Vietnam Veterans websites and e-mail forums and indeed the "Quilts of Tears" has a website of its own as well.

Mothers, sisters, and other family members have adorned the blocks with their loved one's picture, unit patches, military emblems, medals, awards, etc., etc. The quilts were displayed for the first time on the Mall in Washington, DC several years ago. They have since traveled to a quilt show in NJ, several Vietnam Veteran's Reunions in St. Louis, MO, and were also displayed at the Vietnam Veteran Reunion in Kokomo, Ind. They were on display a year ago Veterans Day in the Rotunda of the Utah State Capitol. The quilts are called the "Quilts of Tears" because many tears have been shed for these victims. "The Quilts of Tears" already have letters of acknowledgment and endorsement from both the Agent Orange Coordinating Council and Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc., headquarters in Washington, DC.

I am an Agent Orange widow myself, my late husband, a veteran of both the Korean and Vietnam War, died with cancer in ten parts of his body. Unfortunately, the VA states the cancer he had was not related to his exposure to Agent Orange so there I am not compensated. I believe Agent Orange did cause his death. I am a member of the Agent Orange Coordinating Council, chaired by the late Admiral Zumwalt and have been on the Council for seven years. I made a block for Admiral's son with the words inscribed "A Great Warrior Son" which Admiral Zumwalt requested to be put on his son's block. The block is now a part of the Quilts of Tears.

"The Quilts of Tears" are the Wall for the Agent Orange Victims. Their stories need to be mentioned for all of the suffering and pain they have endured in love and honor for their country, the quilts do just that. One has only to look at the quilts to see for themselves what has happened to these victims. After the display in Kokomo, I received a letter from a veteran who stated the quilts were the most moving piece of art he had seen since the Wall in Washington, DC. A veteran with Agent Orange problems saw the display in Washington, he said he had no one to make a block for him, I told him that I would do it for him. Later he sent me his Purple Heart to put on the block. One of his prized possessions, he insists that it be placed on his block.

These quilts are very dear to the hearts of the Vietnam Veterans, the Agent Orange Victims, and their families. Over Memorial Day weekend last year, a big burly veteran looked at the quilts beside the Reflecting pool, walked a short distance away, fell to his knees and burst into tears. When I went to him and hugged him, he asked "Am I next?". The next display of the quilts will be on Monday April 17, 10:00 a.m. at the "In Memory" ceremony near the Wall, weather permitting, and they will be on the banks of the Reflecting Pool over memorial Day weekend. I invite you and the general public to come and view them.

Recently, I was at an Agent Orange meeting and another Agent Orange widow took a pin off her blouse and put it on my sweater. The pin was a black heart edged in gold, a jagged streak was across the heart to represent a broken heart and in the center of